

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8446
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT OF SPAIN 2672

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OAS, ELAB, TD, OCON

SUBJECT: OAS 5TH INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS
OF LABOR

REF: STATE 221322

1. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO DELEGATION TO GUATEMALA CONFERENCE WILL BE LED BY MINISTER OF LABOUR BRENSELY BARROW. BARROW IS 37-YEAR OLD MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT WHO WAS APPOINTED TO HIS PRESENT POSITION ONLY ONE MONTH AGO. BY TRAINING HE IS AN ACCOUNTANT AND PREVIOUSLY WAS MINISTER OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF HOUSING. AT THIS STAGE HE HAS LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL LABOR PROBLEMS AND ISSUES. HE IS, HOWEVER, AN AGREEABLE AND SOCIALLY GRACIOUS PERSON WITH A FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD THE UNITED STATES.

2. THE SUBSTANTIVE LOAD IN THE TRINIDAD DELEGATION WILL BE CARRIED BY FRANCIS CORBIE, DIRECTOR OF LABOR ADMINISTRATION IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOR. CORBIE IS A YOUNG, BRIGHT, VERY WELL RESPECTED PROFESSIONAL WHO HAS BEEN DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN MOST OF THE IMPORTANT LABOR PROBLEMS IN TRINIDAD AND HAS TRAVELLED EXTENSIVELY TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES. HE WILL BE COMING TO GUATEMALA DIRECTLY FROM A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE ILO IN GENEVA

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WHERE HE WILL REPRESENT TRINIDAD. CORBIE IS WELL INFORMED

ON INTERNATIONAL LABOR AND POLITICAL ISSUES, PARTICULARLY
THOSE OF CONVERN TO THE THIRD WORLD AND GROUP OF 77.

3. THE TWO SUBJECTS ON THE AGENDA IN WHICH TRINIDAD WILL
BE MOST INTERESTED ARE TECHNOLOGY AND EMPLOYMENT AND THE
ROUND TABLE ON TRANSNATIONAL ENTERPRISES. REGARDING THE
FORMER, TRINIDAD CAN BE EXPECTED TO ARTICULATE THIRD WORLD
CONCERNS THAT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERRED TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
BY LABOR -- RATHER THAN CAPITAL -- INTENSIVE, THAT IT BE
APPROPRIATE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY CONDITIONS AND THAT AID
FOR THE ACQUISITION OF SUCH TECHNOLOGY NOT BE TIED TO SPECIFIC
DONOR COUNTRIES. ON THE LATTER SUBJECT, THE TRINIDAD
DELEGATION CAN BE EXPECTED TO REITERATE THE CRITICISM ALREADY
MADE BY TRINIDAD PRIME MINISTER ERIC WILLIAMS (SEE PORT OF
SPAIN TELEGRAMS 1028, 1180 AND 1193) WHEN HE URGED ECLA TO
ESTABLISH A COMMISSION TO STUDY ACTIVITIES OF TNE'S.

4. IN THE PAST, TRINIDAD HAS NOT BAKEN A VERY ACTIVE ROLE
IN OAS MEETINGS OF THIS TYPE. WE WOULD EXPECT THAT THEY
WOULD TAKE A BACK SEAT AT THE GUATEMALA CONFERENCE BUT WOULD
SUPPORT LATIN AMERICAN OR THIRD WORLD TYPE RESOLUTIONS ON
NON-LABOR ISSUES.
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